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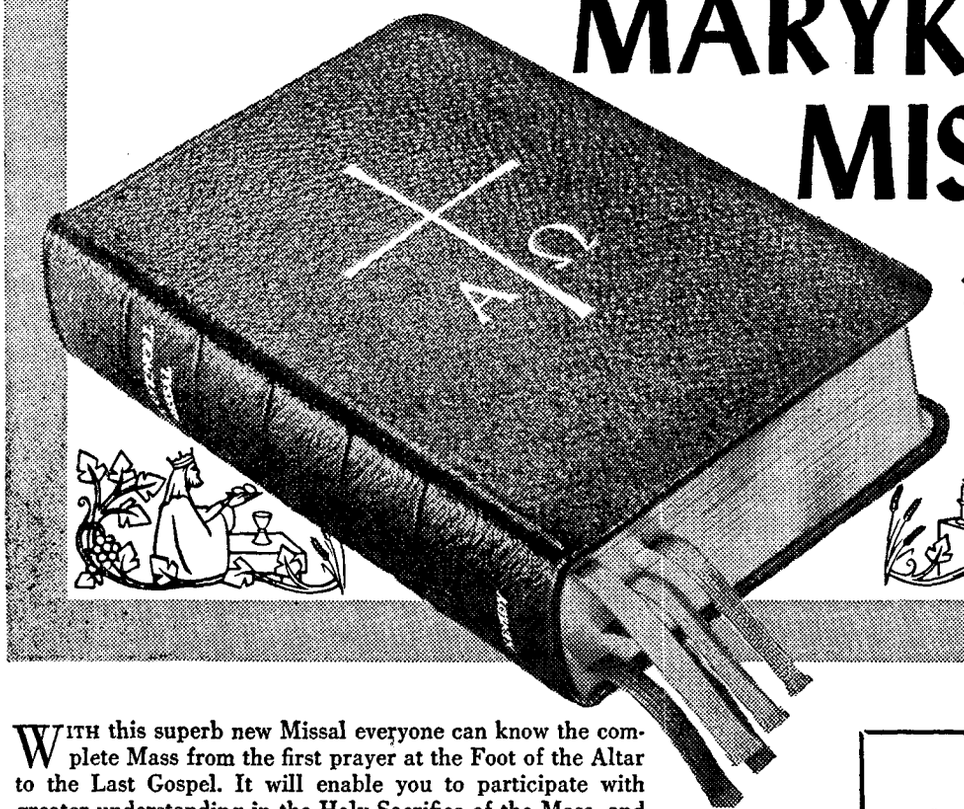

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THE
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A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts

THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN BISHOPS

CENSORSHIP: the very word still rouses many people to ready battle. Once the term is introduced into an issue, whether correctly or not, certain oppositions seem assured. For some the word is a label which, attached to any action, clearly marks it as an assault upon freedom. And they are prepared to rush headlong and headstrong into the fray. Here they are certain to encounter other people, equally determined, who rally to the word "censorship" as to a banner under which they advance to crush some threatening evil. In the heat of discussion, the actual situation which provoked it often drops out of sight, leaving only the two opposing forces militantly arrayed against each other as if one must needs be right and the other overcome.

It would be foolish to expect that any single statement, however compelling in itself, would dissipate these differences. But it is particularly fortuate now, when issues of censorship so deeply eir our society, that the Catholic Bishops of the Inited States have issued such a clear and cogent atement of principles concerning censorship. Quotion and comment will not, of course, replace ie full text, which should be read by all who are oncerned with censorship in our society, but some spects merit particular attention.

After stating that the State has definite, though nited, powers of censorship, the moral right of e Church to exercise censorship is shown to deve "from her office as teacher of morals and ardian of divine truth." Now the best justification r any restraint is that it is imposed for the sake a greater freedom. Freedom of expression, for stance, so intimately related to man's search for ith and to other freedoms which man values, is less indispensable to the Church in fulfilling r mission to preach the Gospel than it is to all of us as citizens. Because freedom of the press is a basic right it must be defended as a true rational freedom. If each member of society were to act in accordance with the law of reason and within the bounds fixed by the "multiple demands of social living," no restraint imposed by external authority would be necessary. This, unfortunately, does not happen and some restraints are always needed in our society.

THE NEED FOR restraints is more clearly evident than are their exact limitations or implementation. The American juridical system, however, recognizing the interdependence of freedoms, is dedicated to the principle of minimal restraint. "Those who become impatient with the reluctance of the State through its laws to curtail human freedom should bear in mind that this is a principle which serves to safeguard all our vital freedoms—to curb less rather than more, to hold for liberty rather than for restraint." While the government is authorized to suppress what is harmful, obscenity for example, courts will be the bulwark of the citizen's liberties.

This principle of minimal legal restraint, however, leaves a gap between the legally punishable and the morally bad. Civil legislation is not intended to be nor should it be regarded as an adequate standard of morality. Other extra-legal standards are called for and it is these that organizations such as the National Legion of Decency and the National Office for Decent Literature were formed to provide.

These agencies attempt to "enlist in a proper and helpful manner" the cooperation of those who can curb the evil, and promote the good. "Although the Church is primarily concerned with morals and not aesthetics, the two are closely related . . . .

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good taste will inevitably narrow the field of what is morally objectionable." The expression of concern through these agencies "cannot justly be termed an attempt to exercise censorship." The activities of these agencies are carried out within the traditions of our democracy and serve to further the good of the entire community.

The Bishops conclude: "A freedom perceived in its true essence, in its exact limits, in its context of responsibility, is a freedom doubly secure; a freedom misunderstood risks becoming a freedom lost."

The entire statement thus states clearly the principles involved in maintaining the proper balance between freedom and restraint in matters related to censorship. It joins issue with those who see not even theoretical justification for agencies such as the National Office for Decent Literature. But it also places a heavy responsibility upon those within such agencies. The Bishops stressed the need for high competence and prudence in exercising the needed restraints.

It must in fairness be admitted that many people, Catholics and non-Catholics, who would accept wholeheartedly the principles enunciated by the Bishops are dismayed by the actions of local Catholic groups who claim to be following them. Such groups do great harm, not only in the communities where they rouse needless antagonisms, but in the larger social community where they call into question the principles under which they claim to act. A most conscientious adherence to the principles of the Bishops' statement is necessary if such local groups are not to be accused, and quite correctly, of arbitrary, repressive action—action which would run exactly contrary to the course outlined by the Bishops.

For all of these reasons the Bishops' statement is a welcome contribution to the discussion of art, morality and censorship.

NEXT WEEK

WALKER PERCY writes from Louisiana of the problem of integration.

"A public high school in the South is at least as social an institution as it is educational. The social body almost coincides with the student body. . . . The same social dimension includes as well the people upstairs, next door, the corner drugstore, and so on."

RECHARGING NATO

IN THE first days of the sputniks it seemed as if a reorganizing of NATO's defense system itself clearly overrode all other considerations. As the time for the Paris meeting approaches it becomes more and more obvious that political, diplomatic and other relationships must also undergo reappraisal. Besides the new Soviet challenge the strain and stress which have been developing among various NATO members have to be confronted. As the U.N. Assembly has cleared the decks to concentrate on colonial issues, which delight the Soviet Union and embarrass the West, a heightened degree of understanding among the North Atlantic Treaty members is all the more imperative.

Even on the matter of generalities much is to be desired. Do Britain and the United States now tend to reach bilateral decisions on matters affecting other members? Is there perhaps a new division, highlighted by North Africa, between the Anglo-Saxons and the continent of Western Europe? In this connection it is worth noting that, when Italy and Belgium were asked to supply the small arms that Tunisia needed, they refused out of regard for an interest in Algeria common with France —and that West Germany has voiced emphatic interest of late in being consulted on all questions involving policy.

Of all the specific issues to be faced at Paris none is thornier than that of Algeria. All shades of French political opinion appear to have been outraged by the dispatch of British and American small arms to Tunisia, after other possibilities, including French shipments, had not worked out. This makes it particularly difficult for the Gaillard government to appear conciliatory about Algeria, over which a terrible war has been raging for the past three years.

The super-charged French atmosphere is also hardly propitious for a reconsideration of the offer of M. Bourguiba of Tunisia and King Mohammed V of Morocco to serve as mediators between France and the Algerian nationalists—an offer which the Algerians have accepted. Both of these men naturally are imbued with sympathy for their fellow Arabs, but they are also staunch friends of France and the West. Only last summer M. Bourguiba had the courage to come out and criticize the Algerian rebel leaders for demanding political independence as an essential precondition for entering into peace negotiations. And the terms these two North African leaders envisage would "lead to the sovereignt

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of the Algerian people," and at the same time "safeguard the interests of France."

The advantage for the French of entering into some sort of negotiations before the U.N. Assembly adopts a resolution calling for full and immediate independence for Algeria should not be overlooked. If the mediation offer could be broadened or modified to include comparable representation from non-colonial, non-satellite Western nations, it might become more acceptable to sorely harassed France. And the whole NATO alliance would be strengthened immeasurably by an Algerian settlement.

MR. STEVENSON'S PART

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE as yet to define just what role Adlai Stevenson is going to play in national foreign policy. Right now he is "consulting" with Administration officials on the coming NATO meeting. Whether he will continue to participate in foreign policy matters after this meeting, or even whether he will go to Paris with Mr. Eisenhower and Mr. Dulles to attend it, is not yet clear. And, given the nature of what he and the Administration are attempting, it is not surprising that his role will have to be defined day by day and week by week rather than in terms of a long-range commitment.

The Paris meeting about which Mr. Dulles and Mr. Stevenson are now conferring is of crucial importance, and the task of the U.S. representatives is clear. News of Soviet scientific advances has created a crisis of confidence among the NATO nations; we must strengthen the ties that bind us together and plan for the future. On the purely military level, it is now more essential than ever that we have forward bases in Europe; only with them can the intermediate missiles we hope to have soon counter to some extent the intercontinental missiles which the Soviet Union possesses. And we must persuade European nations to let us keep launching bases on their soil, despite their fears that such bases will make them the Number One targets for Soviet missiles. Obviously, this is no small task, and it will take all the skill we can muster to bring it about. Since both Democrats and Republicans can agree on this immediate and specific goal, Mr. Eisenhower was wise to invite Mr. Stevenson to participate—although it should now be obvious to the President that even limited bipartisanship will be impossible unless he curbs personal gibes against Democratic participants by members of his official family, such as those recently directed against Adlai Stevenson by Presidential Assistant Sherman Adams.

Beyond the NATO meeting, however, the course is not clear. It may be that both political parties would be able to agree on certain long-range goals for American foreign policy; they certainly would not agree, however, on the best means to attain these goals. And this is the heart of the problem. Sputnik has alerted America to the dangers of a Soviet military breakthrough, on the scientific front, and we will soon see a full-scale Congressional review of our entire missile program. Now it is essential that this military review be accompanied by a sober estimate of what we need to do in order to compete with the Soviet Union on other fronts as well.

We cannot afford to lose our protective military shield; we also cannot afford to forget that behind this shield we must continuously and vigorously engage the Soviet Union in political, scientific and economic warfare on a global scale. To explore and develop the ideas and programs we will need in the years ahead, we need more rather than less discussion and debate. Participation by leaders of the Opposition like Mr. Stevenson in the achievement of agreed-upon, limited goals can be a very good thing. But if the notion of bipartisanship is used to curb serious national debate on foreign policy before it even gets started, then it would represent a real disservice to the country.

THE GIRARD VERDICT

THE GIRARD CASE is now a thing of the past, and the conflicts and misgivings it aroused will presumably soon be forgotten. Girard was found guilty by the Japanese court of "involuntary manslaughter," the lightest charge possible under the circumstances, and he was sentenced to three years, but the sentence was then suspended.

Because of the leniency of the Japanese courts, and the final result of a suspended sentence, some Americans seem to regard the Girard affair as having come to a satisfactory conclusion despite a troublesome start.

In the sense that our status-of-forces agreements with allies all over the world were not wrecked by a blind wave of popular feeling, as seemed possible for a time, the Girard business has turned out well. But we hope that the widespread public satisfaction over the fate of Private Girard goes

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beyond the fact that the decision "went the right way," from an "American" point of view. More important than the particularities of this case is the whole system, called into question during the furor over Girard, of the surrender of jurisdiction over military forces to the allied countries in which they are stationed. It is the status-of-forces system, in all its painfully demonstrated complexity, which deserves American approbation now, and not simply the good luck of young Girard.

BILLIONS AGAINST FALL-OUT?

THERE ARE STILL plenty of Americans who refuse to admit it, but most of us realize deep down that if this country is to keep its guard up under the latest conditions additional money must be spent. The sums officially mentioned so far are hardly alarming (or reassuring). Secretary McElroy seems to be thinking in terms of increased defense expenditures of about five per cent.

Val Peterson's underground shelter program and now the Gaither committee report attain quite other proportions—anywhere from fifteen to forty billion dollars. And the Gaither recommendation makes no pretense of providing protection against the nuclear blasts that would be delivered by Soviet missiles. The vast underground shelter system this truly distinguished group of citizens proposes would seek only to protect the pitiful survivors from radioactive fall-out.

Can this really be a practicable suggestion or will it function primarily as a dramatic way of reminding us of the potential perils we all face? It might well be a graphic attempt to persuade the country to get down to business so that such a holocaust may never come to be.

THE SOIL OF INDIANA

FOR THE second time in recent years, the Indiana Civil Liberties Union has been refused the use of the State World War Memorial auditorium in Indianapolis. The Indiana group, an affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union, had planned a celebration of the 166th anniversary of the signing of the Bill of Rights, but the State War Memorial Commission ruled that use of the publicly-owned building by the Civil Liberties organization "would desecrate this sacred soil." The decision, it was revealed, was based on information furnished by Representative Walter's House Un-American Activities Committee that the A.C.L.U. was a "defender of Communists."

The chairman of the Indiana War Memorial Commission, Mr. Clarence McNabb, specified that the commission's action was not directed against the scheduled celebration's principal speaker, the Right Rev. John P. Craine, Bishop Coadjutor of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Indianapolis. Another invited speaker, Indiana's Governor Harold W. Handley, rejected his invitation, with the explanation that he declined all Sunday speaking engagements in order to devote the day to "God and my family." The Governor, a Legionnaire himself, did not comment on the Civil Liberties Union's charge that the use of the Indianapolis Memorial "is controlled by the American Legion, not the general public, which paid for it in tribute to our war dead."

Governor Handley's obedience to the dictates of his conscience is, of course, unquestionable, and the disputed facts of Indianapolis civic affairs are, at this distance, beyond our competence to ascertain. Yet one cannot help but deplore the terms which have been used to define the argument.

Of course the A.C.L.U. is a "defender of Communists," when and if the civil rights of Communists are violated. The Civil Liberties Union's very reason for existence is to defend the rights and liberties guaranteed *all* Americans by the Constitution. It has been a defender of Communists, and of pacifists, conscientious objectors, white supremacists like John Kasper, and innumerable ordinary citizens in non-ideological disputes, when it seemed that the basic American rights of such people were being threatened. It hardly seems possible that the House Un-American Activities Committee would seriously assert that Communists have no rights, or that the rights of any Americans should not be defended. It hardly seems possible that the Indiana War Memorial Commission could believe that a celebration of the Bill of Rights "would desecrate the soil" of Indianapolis.

It is wearisome that these elementary lessons on civil liberties should have to be recited over and over again—wearisome, but obviously necessary.

BY ANY OTHER NAME?

IN A RECENT television broadcast, Dr. Joseph Kaplan, chairman of the United States Committee for the International Geophysical Year, observed during a discussion of artificial satellites that he did not "like the word 'sputnik.' "

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Shaw and Religion

In his plays, Shaw is concerned with the relationship of men and women not to their own purpose but to that of the universe

by ANNE FREMANTLE

ONE OF THE hazards of any great writer who lives to be almost a hundred is that his centenary will find his reputation at its nadir. Directly after death every great man—be he artist, philosopher, politician, dramatist or scientist—suffers a diminution of prestige and reputation. And when, like George Bernard Shaw, he combines all these avocations, the shrinkage appears to be all the greater. It will probably not be until his second centenary that Shaw's true stature will be clear. Will he emerge, as some believe, the only dramatist in the English language who is in Shakespeare's class, as well as a prophet whose predictions not only came true, but who, as politician, made them come true? Or will he be written off as an Irish windbag, frivolous, a lightweight who caught the imagination of his time?

Another of the disadvantages of his longevity is that those of his biographers who pretend to a real or intimate knowledge of him are the contemporaries, or near contemporaries, whose main claim to write his life is that they have survived their model. And this results, in both these biographies of Shaw, *George Bernard Shaw: Man of the Century,* by Archibald Henderson (Appleton-Century, $12) and *Bernard Shaw: His Life, Work and Friends,* by St. John Ervine (Morrow, $7.50), in works that are essentially reference books, undeniably useful and spritely, but marred, in both cases, by intolerable opinionatedness, pontification and editorializing.

For these gentlemen, to whom no one would listen unless collared in club or home, deliver themselves of oracular idiocies and long disquisitions. Henderson, for instance, tells us that Shaw's wife kept him in a "cottonwool paradise of adulation which was unhealthy for him" and explains Shaw's "madness" by his "thwarted childhood and the repression in early life of his natural instincts, and his deprivation of the normal social training of a normal youth." And Mr. Ervine, not outdone, says that "the labourer's child has opportunities today that were not easily available to middle-class children in 1888," and that "Marriage has always been, and always will be, difficult . . . marriage is not a sacrament, it is an arrangement for the comfortable increase of mankind."

But it is when faced with Shaw's interior life that both writers really flounder. Henderson grants to G.B.S an "intensely religious feeling about life in general," and Ervine notes that "G.B.S. was a preacher not less determined than Savonarola to call sinners to repentance." But Henderson complains of the fact that at the very end of Shaw's life "religion was still his hope of the world" and quotes Hankinson of the N. Y. *Times,* who, reviewing "St. Joan," noted that "Shaw is not only one of the keenest minds in the world today, he is one of the most religious of men." Both seem to regard Shaw's concern with religion as an aberration. Certainly Shaw repudiated the religion of his birth and was harshly anti-Protestant.

RAISED IN the Church of Ireland, he could not have despised it more, nor have rejected it more emphatically. "To this day," wrote Shaw "my flesh creeps when I recall that genteel suburban Irish Protestant church, built by Roman Catholic workmen who would have considered themselves damned had they crossed its threshold afterwards. Every separate stone, every pane of glass, every fillet of ornamental ironwork—half dog-collar, half coronet—in that building must have sowed a separate evil passion in my young heart. Yes; all the vulgarity, savagery and bad blood which has marred my literary work, was certainly laid upon me in that house of Satan . . .

Mrs. Fremantle, a contributing editor of The Commonweal, is a well-known critic and writer.

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Protestantism in Ireland is not a religion; it is a side in political faction, class prejudice, a conviction that Roman Catholics are socially inferior persons, who will go to hell when they die, and leave Heaven in the exclusive possession of ladies and gentlemen . . . I cannot say that in Ireland every man is the worse for what he calls his religion. I can only say that all the people I know were."

And Shaw goes on: "Imagine being taught that there is one God, a Protestant and a perfect gentleman, keeping Heaven select for the gentry against an idolatrous imposter called the Pope . . . My first doubt as to whether God could really be a good Protestant was suggested by the fact that the best voices available for combination with my mother's in the works of the great composers had been unaccountably vouchsafed to Roman Catholics . . . Even the Divine gentility was presently called in question, for some of these vocalists were undeniably shopkeepers . . .There was no help for it; if my mother was to do anything but sing silly ballads in drawing rooms, she had to associate herself . . . with people of like artistic gifts . . . She must actually permit herself to be approached by Roman Catholic priests, and at their invitation enter that house of Belial, the Roman Catholic chapel, and sing the Masses of Mozart there."

The recently published letters from G.B.S. to Dame Laurentia McLachlan, Abbess of Stanbrook (*In A Great Tradition*. By the Benedictines of Stanbrook. Harper. $5.) reveal nothing new about Shaw's attitude. But they give new proof of his lifelong concern with the essentials of religion and his impatience with non-essentials.

For example, in the discussion of "St. Joan" which nun and dramatist had, largely by letter, Shaw is delighted "to learn that my St. Joan is also yours." But it is his long letter to Dame Laurentia from the Holy Land that best shows his real feeling for the limestone rock upon which "the feet of Jesus pattered . . . and the feet of Mary pursued him to keep him in order." He was furious when Sir Sydney Cockerell suggested he sign the stone he brought Dame Laurentia from Bethlehem, and administered a well-deserved rebuke: "Why can it not be a secret between us and Our Lady and her little boy? What the devil—saving your cloth—could we put on it? We couldn't put our names on it, could we? It seems to me something perfectly awful."

And how he snubs Cockerell, who wanted to put on the stone "an inscription explaining its purpose." "If we could explain its purpose," writes Shaw, "we could explain the universe. I couldn't. Could you? If Cockerell thinks he can . . . let him try, and submit the result to the Pope. Dear Sister: our finger prints are on it, and Heaven knows whose footprints may be on the stone. Isn't that enough? . . . Brother Bernard."

But it is in his lovely essay "On Going to Church," first printed in *The Savoy* for January 1896, that Shaw explained why he went to church, and what he did there. "But then," he wrote, "I go to church . . . if you should chance to see, in a country churchyard, a bicycle leaning against a tombstone, you are not unlikely to find me inside the church if it is old enough or new enough to fit its purposes. There I find rest without languor and recreation without excitement . . . Any place where men dwell, village or city, is a reflection of the consciousness of every single man. In my city there is a market, a garden, a workshop, a lover's walk, above all, a cathedral . . . shewing me where, within the cathedral, I may find my way to the cathedral within me. At all events, the Godhead within me, certified by the tenth chapter of St. John, refuses to enter barren places."

IN ALL HIS plays, from "Major Barbara" to "St. Joan," Shaw is concerned with the problem of the relationship of men and women not "to their own purpose but to that of the whole universe." Major Barbara expresses this concern when she tells Undershaft in their last scene that she must do God's work because He cannot do it alone, since He created men and women expressly to do it. Shaw states the case for himself as a dramatist at the end of the Preface of "Back to Methuselah": his job is the serious exposition in all his work of a religious intention. Ervine says—and who will disagree with him?—that the "best book on Shaw that has been written and will probably be the best that will ever be written," is that by G. K. Chesterton, and G. K. pays tribute to Shaw as a religious man, perhaps even more than that, a holy man.

G. K. notes that "however G.B.S. may shout profanities . . . there is always something about him which suggests that in a sweeter and more solid civilization he would have been a great saint." "A saint," he adds, "of the sternly ascetic type." For G.B.S. has "the gift which all the saints declare the reward of chastity, a great clearness of the intellect, like the hard clearness of crystal." Chesterton puts his finger on Shaw's fundamental seriousness. "He is never frivolous, never gives his opinions a holiday, is never irresponsible, even for an instant, his wit is never weakness, never a sense of humor." He declares that G.B.S. had that "strange note of the saint in him, that he is literally unworldly," with "a sort of awful elegance, a dangerous and somewhat inhuman daintiness of taste which sometimes seems to shrink from matter as though it were mud."

"Unfortunately this Christian Church, founded gaily with a pun," Shaw wrote, "has become the Church where you must not laugh; and so it is giving way to that older and greater Church to which *I* belong—the

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Church where the oftener you laugh the better, because by laughter only can you destroy evil without malice and affirm good fellowship without mawkishness." And in his preface to *Immaturity,* he added: "I discovered that in the Ages of Faith the sport of making fun of the accessories and legends of religion was organized and practiced by the Church to such an extent that it was almost part of its ritual." He recollected, too, in *Sixteen Self Sketches,* that the nearest he came to appreciating the practice of religion as a child was joking with a Rabelaisian uncle.

Shaw would not have agreed with Mr. Ervine's suggestion that the object of "Widowers' Houses" was "to enforce the faith that the Church had been failing to enforce for several centuries." Shaw never would have agreed to *enforce* any faith: his whole object, in all his plays, was to make people use their freedom and by shocking, amusing or instructing them, to bring them to the exercise of their God-given reason. He rubbed peoples' noses in slums, malnutrition, poverty, disease and dirt, because he wished them to care enough to do away with all of these. But the faith to which he had come, and to which he wished to bring them, was not one any Church or any individual, least of all G.B.S., could enforce. This is borne out in his great letter, published in the *Daily News* of September 29, 1913, *à propos* of "Androcles and the Lion," in which he suggests a dialogue between Christ and Mars, the god of War.

It is a pity that St. John Ervine has to use G.B.S. as the occasion to trot out his own views of Jesus. The reader must endure Ervine's silly blasphemies: such as that "Jesus felt afraid of miracle-mongering because he feared that he might fail to repeat a success." Shaw had suggested that Jesus did only a limited number of miracles because He wanted people to listen to His message, not to want His gifts. Mr. Henderson takes plenty of cracks at Shaw too, and never fails to tell us where *he* ticked Shaw off. He condemns the "vortex in thought" that for Shaw represented what man might become in future ages as "a vision of dull aridities of a sort of unhappy contemplation," though he admits that Shaw foresaw it as the supreme happiness. No one can doubt that the prospect of the Beatific Vision would fill Mr. Henderson with unutterable boredom; indeed, his diatribe against Shaw's longing for it reminds this reader of the parody:

Hark the herald angels sing
Timidily, because Dean Inge
Has arrived, and seems to be
Bored with immortality

Mr. Henderson or no, it was Shaw's conception that the intellectual love of Truth is the highest possible human activity.

Gesture toward the Arts

The creation of an advisory committee on the arts for the national government amounts to little more than ritual piety

by FRANK GETLEIN

A FEW WEEKS AGO, Secretary Dulles announced the appointment by President Eisenhower of an advisory committee on the arts for the federal government. Practically all the circumstances of the new commission support the supposition that its creation is a gesture of ritual piety and nothing more. The making of the gesture, however, reveals that even the present Administration recognizes—if not that something should be done about art and government—at least that enough people apparently think so to make worthwhile the appearance of doing something.

The assumption that the new committee is strictly windowdressing—and not very attractive windowdressing—may seem arbitrary and premature. But it is based on more than a judgment of the Eisenhower style, though the announcement fits the style perfectly, with the familiar combination of patently sincere good will, broad generalities that most people favor, and the total absence of anything specific.

The first reason to assume the built-in futility of the new committee on the arts is the source of the announcement. There is something askew in having a body created for "Congress and the federal government" announced by the Secretary of State. Coming, as the announcement did, on the heels of the Presi-

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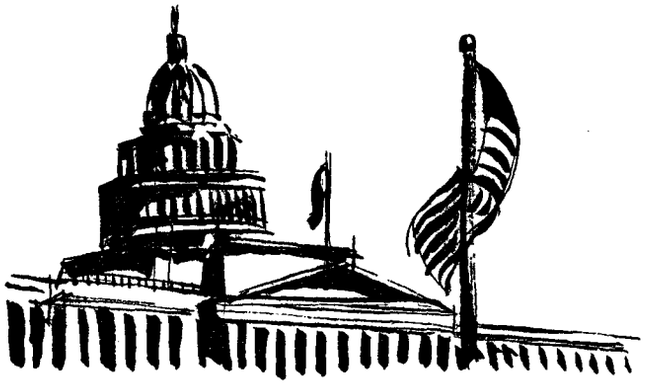
dent's moving Arthur Larson from U.S.I.A., our chief cultural agency abroad, to a special post in charge of anti-sputnik propaganda, the source suggests that our government regards the arts as it apparently regards the travels of American citizens and the work abroad of American reporters, namely, as instruments of American foreign policy. And since U.S.I.A. is already in business, the source further suggests that the main ends of the new committee were accomplished by the announcement itself.

Then there is the composition of the new group. There are a couple of respectable names, some odds and ends based, presumably, on geography, a clubwoman, a popular novelist, and not only Robert Montgomery, television producer and the President's coach in that medium, but also George Murphy, former tap dancer and actor, whose recent years have been devoted to public relations for M.G.M. and who is best known for his stage management of the 1956 Republican convention.

The most striking thing about the membership of the group is the absence of the one man who has fought a tireless and lengthy campaign for the establishment of a meaningful arts commission, Lloyd Goodrich of the Whitney Museum. It is by no means unthinkable that one purpose of the new appointments was to dissipate some of the pressure Goodrich has been creating over the years for a thorough examination of the relationship between art and government.

THE LARGE ODDS against the new committee's amounting to anything, however, come from the fact that it duplicates, in announced function, an already existing federal commission on the fine arts, a smaller body which has been in business since before World War I. While the old commission has restricted its activities pretty much to the preservation of the L'Enfant city plan for the District of Columbia, it exists by law to advise the government on art.

Advice, then, there is plenty of. What would be the functions of an honest and effective federal art agency? Basically, the same as the functions of the various government departments concerned with other aspects of the country's population, economy and interest. These are: to amass and interpret information; to formulate, in the most general terms, some kind of ideal situation; and, in the light of both information and this ideal, to initiate programs and suggest legislation aimed at moving toward the ideal.



The most recent example of the crying need for an active and authentic federal arts commission was in the affair, eighteen months ago, of the exhibitions of American art arranged for overseas use by U.S.I.A. and canceled after protests by "patriotic" groups that several of the artists represented were "left-wing" or "red affiliated."

The immediate point is that there was no one in government to speak for art. The U.S.I.A. is using art, but its first duty is to remain in existence. When a situation seems to pose a choice between the defense of art and survival, the agency must choose survival. There was no investigation whatsoever as to whether the charges were well- or ill-founded, or whether the charges made any difference whatsoever to the exhibitions themselves. The exhibitions had been assembled by a private, non-profit exhibition service, the American Federation of Arts. When the Federation refused to withdraw paintings by the accused artists, U.S.I.A. simply scrapped the shows rather than risk offending certain elements in Congress.

The background of the incident of the exhibitions furnishes further reasons for an independent government agency for art. The "patriotic" groups—in Texas, as it happens—got their information from "extensions of remarks" put in the Congressional Record by Congressman Dondero of Michigan. At one time or another Dondero listed in the Congressional Record, either by name or by association, just about every important American artist, museum director and art critic, as being "red affiliated."

These documentations were mailed by the thousands to "patriotic" groups everywhere. Dondero told this writer that no government funds had been spent either for the investigation or the dissemination of news on the Communism in art situation. He got his "facts" from the same people who picked up the tab for the reprints and mailings. The benefactors were, he said, "patriotic American artists, the men who do the murals and sculpture for our government buildings."

DONDERO is retired now and his whole eight-year program of harassment in the arts may be considered only an extraordinary example of legislative naivete. But could it happen again? You bet it could.

Meanwhile, the phrase "murals and sculpture for our government buildings" brings up the fact that the government is involved in art whether it wants to be or not. It invests every year in "murals and sculpture"

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and every year it gets an awful lot of wasted marble, cast concrete and paint for its money. The reason is that a distinct "government style" has evolved. In sculpture, where most of the money goes, the style consists of more or less worn-out symbols heavily streamlined in what was once a neo-classic manner. Heavy women and prancing horses seem to be the main products; you can't really say much against either horses or women, but you can suggest that the main stream of American sculpture has gone elsewhere and it might be a good idea for the taxpayers' money to be invested in parts of the elsewhere. A working and knowledgeable arts commission could explore ways to bring together the monumental assignments of government art and those American artists who have demonstrated that they have an ear sensitive to other voices than the echoes of the First Empire.

A natural function of such a commission would be the sponsorship and direction of American participation in international art exhibitions, such as the one just closed in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and next spring's in Venice. Interestingly enough, one of the stock objections to an effective commission is that it would lead to domination by "modern art," a term rarely defined by its opponents. Modern art, in the sense of variance from the neo-classic, has been dominant for close to a hundred and fifty years now, but there are degrees and distinctions within the overall term. From the point of view of opposition to communication in art and the ignoring of the traditional craft criteria of painting, the American extreme of the moment is loosely called "abstract expressionism." In lieu of any government agency to represent our art internationally, a subdivision of the Museum of Modern Art has generously filled the gap, and in Brazil this fall American painting was totally abstract expressionist, with half of it given over to a retrospective of the late Jackson Pollack and the other half to various of his associates. The Museum's international council will also do the Venice show in 1958, where it is quite likely that the pattern will be repeated.

Whatever the bent of a hypothetical arts commission, it could hardly be more extreme than the Museum's council has demonstrated itself to be. Perhaps more to the point, the elevation of American representation in these international shows to an official level would immeasurably improve this country's cultural reputation among other nations, which one and all have official bodies dealing with the arts.

AT HOME, perhaps the most urgent task for such a body is a comprehensive survey of the art situation in America. What are our art resources? How are they being used? What is the market structure for American art and how does it work? No one is in a position to do more than guess at the answers even to these three questions, elementary as they may appear.

As an example of our ignorance, take the market structure. It is generally assumed that art producer meets consumer through a dealer, who takes anywhere from twenty-five to forty per cent of the sale price as payment for his service. Yet this situation has been true only of New York City. Elsewhere museums, universities, artists' cooperatives, restaurants, theaters and women's clubs serve as the machinery. Furthermore, in New York there are indications that the traditional dealer function has been all but abandoned in the last decade. It is entirely possible that a majority of New York dealers now operate in the manner of that fringe in the mechanics of literature known as vanity publishing, with the artist himself financing his one man show and with the public deprived of the measure of expert screening that has been a part of the traditional New York system.

The point is that we don't know what the market structure is. The prime objection to a government-sponsored study that would find out what that structure is, as well as uncovering other equally basic facts, is not that ignorance is good. Opposition rises from the supposition that information would lead to action and the action would probably be some form of government subsidy either for artists or art institutions or possibly both.

A serious, detailed proposal for such subsidy is still a fairly remote possibility. When it is made, it need not be dismissed out of hand as subversive of the free nature of art. From the Greeks to Goya, the substantial majority of human art was produced with the aid of government subsidy of some kind. The art laws of Europe and the tax laws of America should both remind us that Western thought still regards art as somehow belonging to us all.

FIRST SNOW

October, and an early snow
Etched out the autumn's glow;
All that was fragmentary, vagrant
Hid away,
And on a medieval parchment
Stiff and gray
Lettered in black and white
Winter's first day.
But the next morning letter after letter paled,
And with our autumn's crime and blood and burial
We were again assailed.

EDA LOU WALTON.

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SPEAK OF THE DEVIL

A BOOK was published during the second world war which bore the intriguing title *The Hitler in Ourselves.* It was the author's thesis that the Nazi movement and teachings were the incarnation of evils which to a lesser extent are found in all of us. The idea is startling, for it suggests that there might be something diabolic—some evil intelligence at work—in the totalitarian movements which have caused so much grief in the modern world. Communism, for instance, has been called the Ape of God—and what better description of His Satanic Majesty has ever been devised?

I hesitate to write of such things, for more than one reason. I hesitate because diabolism is a difficult subject; I am not instructed on it. I hesitate also because I would not like to give any solace to those who would like to dehumanize individual Communists and treat them as the Devil himself should be treated. The Communist is a man and in this country he is usually a very unhappy man. I would not like to say that he is the plaything of Satan or that he is beyond redemption as some people would, but I do believe he is often the victim of the subtlest Satanic tactic, especially when he does good for the sake of evil. To do good for the sake of evil is even worse than doing evil for the sake of good.

So let me make myself clear. In seeing the evil intelligence in the Communist movement, I do not mean to say that individual Communists are possessed. I do mean to say that they have been entrapped—and by a force more terrible than any found on earth. It is said of Satan that his genius lies in being able to *organize* evil. It is this special genius that I am associating with totalitarianism.

But if one believes in Satan, the place to look for his work is in oneself, not in others. And if the diabolic explanation of totalitarianism has any claim on our belief it must be on such terms. Evil is found everywhere. Satan is no respecter of persons. We are all subject to his beguilement. By the same token salvation is as possible for the individual Communist as it is for the rest of us.

Yet—I will say it—there is something peculiarly Satanic about totalitarianism: it represents evil organized by preternatural intelligence.

This, I know, will shock some who read it. I have friends who will dismiss it as religious obscurantism. But the more I think about totalitarianism, the less convinced I am that it can be understood as a mere natural phenomenon. The devilish mixture of good and evil, with the good serving the evil; the doctrinal exaltation of malice and deceit; the significant role that pride plays in keeping people in the Party even after they have no shred of true belief in its original promise; and (this especially) the sacrifice of individual Communists who give up careers, family, personal ambitions and social acceptance—the Ape of God, indeed. The purely political or merely natural explanation of such things strikes me as being just as unsatisfactory as the skeptic's bumbling explanation of Lourdes.

So to those who will wonder because I have suggested the possibility of Evil Intelligence at work I can only say that the malice of totalitarianism leaves us both with a mystery and add that the Devil's greatest ruse is to convince us that he does not exist.

The sheer sweep of totalitarian evil and its organization is of course beyond our personal experience. But we do recognize separate instances of the classic sins exalted as Party virtue, for we find them in ourselves. There was a shock of recognition, for instance, in Howard Fast's description of the Party Leader (*Saturday Review,* Nov. 16):

"When asked his opinion on any subject, providing the question comes from an important source, he assumes an attitude and, talking not to you but through and beyond you, declaims the proper one of some few dozen opinions he is always officially provided with . . . . His carefulness is exhibited whenever he speaks or writes. He eschews original opinions as the devil himself; he restricts himself to areas of proven safety, where Marx or, preferably, Lenin can be quoted to back up his position . . . . His high moment comes when he feels it safe to be 'sharp' with an opponent; and then he lives . . . . He is withering in his scorn, contemptuous in his sarcasm, and terrifying in his condemnation. In a land where he is the power, he reads a prelude to prison or death . . . in a capitalist country he is limited to moral destruction—and as he conceives the needs of this objective he proceeds to humiliate his opponent, or unseat him, or make him an outcast, or require penitence or a plea for forgiveness, or lay the groundwork for forgiveness . . . . He learns a bag of tricks which he uses with tiresome regularity . . . (One) method is to listen like a hawk until he can fix one phrase or statement that represents a possible deviation. When he has latched onto this, he throws it in as something so heinous that it overshadows all ideas. He now becomes the single-minded defender of the purity of the Party line. . . . "

We have all had experience with, and maybe we have acted like, men like this. The difference is that in Communism the behavior proceeds from doctrine not merely personal pride.

JOHN COGLEY.

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THE SCREEN

DON'T TAKE THE FISH—OR THE SQUIRREL

COMMERCIAL air lines may not be too happy about "Zero Hour!" but thrill-seeking audiences should find it to their liking. Its plot, about a group of people who go through a terrifying experience on a cross-country flight, has a familiar ring, but Producer John C. Champion has packaged it differently and Director Hall Bartlett has given it a suspenseful pace. The screenplay they wrote with Arthur Hailey doesn't bother too much with story; it quickly establishes a few facts about Dana Andrews, whose wife (Linda Darnell) is leaving him because he's been living in a neurotic funk ever since World War II. He was a fighter pilot, and he felt responsible for the death of six of his fliers. Now in Canada, he hurriedly boards the plane on which his wife and little son are flying to Vancouver.

Once the plane is in the air, the film swings into action. The stewardess (Peggy King) settles the passengers, offers them a choice of lamb chops or fish for dinner, and serves the food. A short time later, those who ate the fish, including the pilot (Elroy "Crazylegs" Hirsch) and the co-pilot, are writhing in agony. A passenger-doctor (Geoffrey Toone) quickly realizes the fish was contaminated. He tends the sick, some of whom are seriously ill and need hospitalization at once. But the plane has passed the point of no return and the increasing storms over the Canadian Rockies prevent its landing. It must continue the four-hour flight to Vancouver; and Andrews, as the only passenger who has flown a plane—and this was a one-engine craft, some ten years ago—must take over the controls. The situation is contrived, with storms, illness, mountains, a neurotic pilot, hysterical passengers and an air line chief pilot in Vancouver, telling Andrews what to do by radio, who is acquainted with Andrews' wartime record and belligerent about it. But "Zero Hour!" is done with an earnest realism that makes it both convincing and terrifying. Sterling Hayden is excellent as the man in the Vancouver airport who realizes, in spite of his skepticism, that he must give Andrews confidence and guide him through the maze of controls and gauges to a safe landing. Under Bartlett's direction, the rest of the cast also turn in good, straightforward performances. The picture might have been more effective if it hadn't piled woe on woe, but as an exercise in suspense "Zero Hour!" is a guaranteed success.

WHAT DISTINGUISHES "The Invisible Boy" from most science-fiction thrillers is the good production Nicholas Nayfack has given it and the lively sense of humor with which Cyril Hume has imbued its script. Its plot starts simply enough with a brilliant scientist (Philip Abbott) who is upset by the fact that although he built and now operates a giant computor (an elaborate machine that contains the sum total of all human knowledge and makes Univac look like a toy) he cannot teach his ten-year-old son (Richard Eyer) how to play chess. So the father gets the mechanical brain to do the job, and this computor, which becomes the villain of the piece, teaches the boy not only chess but also many other things, including how to make a discarded robot work. In no time Robby the Robot and the boy build a large kite that flies the youngster over the housetops (much to his mother's fright and anger) and Robby teaches the boy how to become invisible (much to the annoyance of his father, who insists the child is doing this only to gain attention). Things get really out of hand, and the plot awfully involved, when the computor sends Robby and the boy into outer space in a rocket and tries to put itself, orbit by orbit, in control of the earth. Whether audiences like science-fiction stuff or not, they will find "The Invisible Boy" done with imagination and they will be fascinated by the fact that the picture was made before Sputniks I and II were actually a fact. Herman Hoffman did a good job of directing his cast and such devices of the electronic age as Robby, the computor, the kite, the rocket and other gadgets that may be more scientific than fictional by the time you see this movie.

WALT DISNEY'S latest movie, "Perri," purports to be a straight nature piece and as far as its visuals are concerned it is. It has marvelous shots of Perri, a young pine squirrel, first in her nest, then learning about the forest around her and how to climb, run from the enemy and hunt. Disney's photographers have done an amazing job in scenes showing Perri, and later her boyfriend Porro, being chased by a marten or wildcat, and in the scenes showing various wild-life mothers teaching their young. My favorite episodes concern a mother racoon and her three young mixing it up with a mother skunk and her three; the matrons have an awful time straightening out their broods. My least favorite episodes are built around the killings and deaths, of which there are many in "Perri," although they didn't seem to bother the youngsters in the audience. And my least favorite aspect of the whole production is the narration. Although based on Felix Salten's novel, this is in verse of a quality hardly likely to lift audiences into realms of fancy, and its sentimental concepts seem quite inappropriate. But perhaps the doggerel and anthropomorphic pattern are not so important. What counts most is the visuals, and they are superb.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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COMMUNICATIONS

"THE CATHOLIC PRESS"

Fort Madison, Iowa.

TO THE EDITORS: Aside from the fact that Mr. McDonald's dissatisfaction with negativism in the Catholic press [Oct. 18] is possibly not exactly a quarrel with eight of the Ten Commandments as Monsignor Kelly seems to imply in his letter [Nov. 15], isn't it still true that Catholics are primarily heralds of the Gospel, not of the Decalogue? (Indeed, assuming that we must be saved, and since, in our fallen nature, we cannot perfectly fulfill the Law, does not the Decalogue itself somehow necessitate the Gospel?)

Too, assuming—which I do not for a moment—that Monsignor Kelly's belittling of Mr. McDonald's evaluation of certain headlines be valid, do not such headlines, and similar ones—I recall one, for instance, about spanking a *beata* (or was it an *us*?), and recently there was another in this vein concerning a U.S. Army helicopter putting a cross on top of a German Church—tend to put the Church in the same class with the stuntsters who get married on top of ferris wheels or in skin suits under the sea?

As for positive suggestions, I'd settle for three. (In fact, any one of the following three because any one of them would eventually come to satisfy the other two as well.)

First: be Papal-minded. And, please, may we have the entire text of the Holy Father's statements; if *all* His words are not news to Catholics, what is? (I recall one national weekly burying on an inside page even the story—and that was mighty skimpy—of what was considered one of the most important speeches of our present Holy Father's reign, whereas the lead article and headlines on the front page were in praise of Franco's economic system. Could this possibly suggest a deeper, more subtle malady of which such headlines and such news evaluation is but symptomatic? And might it not be a bit more fair to Mr. McDonald to suggest that it is perhaps this more basic malady which he wishes to help allay?)

Second: Present Catholic realities in terms of their very nature, not in the present-day aberrations they are frequently found in, and then show us how to conform subjectively to these objective realities.

To illustrate, I have in mind things as fundamental as the Mass. Recently, the main feature of yet another national weekly was a series of articles on the Mass. The opening paragraphs by implication first equated the Church with the Latin rite, and then proceeded to canonize the *status quo* with reference to participation in the Mass. The article pointed out, for instance, that Latin was used, that the priest spoke inaudibly, etc., because only God needed to hear; there was no hint of the instructional nature of the Mass of the Catechumens, of the social nature of the liturgy, or of the Baptismal character which, according to St. Thomas, deputizes us to it, much less of the existence either of *Mystici Corporis* or of *Mediator Dei* . . . Little wonder the notion still generally persists, and is espoused even by priests, that the social nature of the Eucharistic Sacrifice and Its Meal may be ignored, and that no hierarchy of values exists with regard to participation in Them. (We parish priests are having enough of a struggle trying to implement *Mediator Dei* without having to fight the largest segments of the Catholic press on this score besides.)

Third: Be intellectually honest. There are yet in existence Catholic journals, one of which was plugged by our seminary rector as the trade journal of the American priest, which published irresponsible and uncharitable attacks by relatively obscure American priests upon, for example, the liturgical apostolate; yet, when world-recognized scholars and eminent authorities in their field, such as Father Jungmann, wrote to indicate that even the citation of sources in these attacks was erroneous, Father Jungmann's rebuttal never appeared —not, at least, in the attacking journals. Another publication, learning of the one-sided situation, brought Jungmann's rebuttal to light. (One of these offenders is at this time soliciting my subscription; I will seek assurances first—and if more Catholics sought the same, perhaps our press might improve at least in intellectual fairness—that their intellectual integrity will, in the future, merit subscription.)

But, for all that, my faith in the *potential* of the Catholic press is such that I hope it will become, even generally, what its name seems to imply: the constant, dependable, unafraid and unpartisan purveyor of the unadulterated truth. Indeed, a reassuring number—The Commonweal has long been among them—are just such purveyors; and it appears that they are leaven to the rest. *Deo gratias!*

(*Rev.*) CLARENCE W. STANGOHR.

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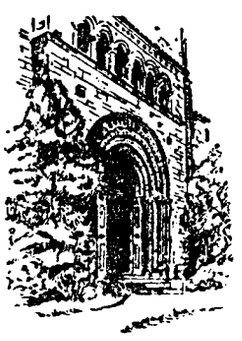

Prospective students should make early application

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Soviet novelist Dudintsev was first delighted, then scared and finally intimidated

Not by Bread Alone

by HELENE ISWOLSKY

AFTER THE tremendous appeal his book met among readers in Soviet Russia, Vladimir Dudintsev, author of *Not By Bread Alone,* was first delighted, then scared and finally intimidated into partial submission. His novel, serialized last spring in the Soviet literary review *Novy Mir,* was avidly read, ardently discussed and almost out of print before the Soviet censors became aware that they had made an irreparable blunder in passing such dangerously subversive material. While the censors were still wondering what to do about this, most Soviet literary critics, intellectual circles and student groups were declaring the novel a *must* in their debates. Finally Khrushchev himself had to put on the brakes by condemning the book in speeches he made at the Congress of Soviet Writers and Artists in September 1957.

But even Khrushchev had to admit that "Dudintsev has pages rightly and strongly written." What the Communist Party boss found most objectionable was that the author of *Not By Bread Alone* not only saw defects in the Soviet system, but seemed to think these defects could not be removed, and "deliberately laid the colors too thick." It is doubtful, however, that Dudintsev really is a pessimist. On the contrary, he may have thought that by writing harshly he could help bring about the changes which everybody was crying for. In any case, Dudintsev broke the rules of Soviet "realism," which wants writers to be realistic only in so far as the reality they represent is favorable to Communism.

What will be the further fate of Dudintsev's novel —and of the author himself—we still do not know. He has been requested to make some changes in his novel, and all favorable reports on his work have been suppressed. With the hardening of the Soviet party line on all fronts, it is most probable that Dudintsev will not be *persona grata* again for a long time to come, if ever. But this drastic dealing with a popular writer comes as no surprise to the Soviet reader. During World War II, at the height of patriotic enthusiasm, Soviet writer A. Fadeyev wrote a novel, *The Young Guard,* which, without awakening the furor brought about by Dudintsev's book, did enjoy considerable success and was later condemned under Stalin. Fadeyev's story was about the young guerrilla fighters who contributed to Hitler's defeat in Russia, and such a story was naturally hailed by Soviet youth. But there was a fly in the ointment. Fadeyev had described guerrilla fighters as acting without any Party directives. He was ordered to rewrite his story, showing how the "young guard" had been organized by Communist instructors. Fadeyev rewrote his story, and was rewarded by being appointed president of the Association of Soviet Writers. He never got over the crisis, however. He took to drink, and finally shot himself. Significantly, it is the first, suppressed version of his novel which stirred his readers, and this original version has become a collector's item.

WE ARE very fortunate that Dudintsev's original book reached us before Nemesis struck. We had the text in this country in the *Novy Mir* installments, and later in a reprint of these in book form, at a time when the novel became unavailable in Russia. And now we have the English translation (Dutton, $4.95) which, as the jacket tells us, "rocked the Soviet Union." From the publisher's note we learn that Dudintsev "wished to make changes in the American edition of *Not By Bread Alone,* but these changes were denied him. Instead, he was permitted to write a preface to the American edition; this preface is the expression of Dudintsev's fears of being denounced in Soviet Russia as a man adding fuel to foreign propaganda against the U.S.S.R. Dudintsev maintains, or is forced to maintain, that he meant no harm in speaking the truth. We readily believe him and let it pass at that."

"I present my book," Dudintsev writes, "to the new reader, counting on his unbiased judgment." And he adds that there is in his novel simply "a hatred of evil," "a great love of humanity" and "faith in the inevitable victory of the forces of reason and justice." This no doubt is quite true, and it is why the Soviet censors wanted the author to make "changes."

Helene Iswolsky, a long-time contributor, is the author of *Soviet Man Now* and *Soul of Russia.*

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The English translator of Dudintsev's novel, Dr. Edith Bone, has rendered the story both accurately and vividly. This was no easy matter, since *Not By Bread Alone* is a long, intricate tale, with a great many major and minor characters. There is an abundance of detail and a variety of settings, difficult to follow for the reader unfamiliar with Soviet surroundings, but thanks to Dr. Bone, he can find his way around without too much trouble.

Not By Bread Alone is no masterpiece of style, nor is the plot particularly exciting, at least in outline. It is the story of an engineer, Lopatkin by name, who has devoted his whole life to an invention, a machine for the casting of iron pipes. The invention, an efficient and labor-saving device, is either ignored or deliberately suppressed by the Soviet bureaucrats and military brass. Lopatkin is reduced to poverty, and after fruitless attempts to have his machine approved, he is robbed of his invention by ruthless officials, and himself arrested, tried and sent to a prison camp. He does finally succeed in justifying himself. He is released from prison and his invention is at last officially approved. But in spite of the "happy ending," the bitterness of the story is what is most felt, and what will probably always be linked with Lopatkin's story.

THE PLOT may seem unattractive to American readers, but we must recall that many Soviet novels deal with industrialization. In many of these novels, as for instance in Gladkov's *Cement* and Marietta Shagynian's *Hydrocentral,* which set the pattern in the twenties and thirties, the machine figures as principal interest, but it is—just as in the Dudintsev novel—a symbol of deeper conflicts. What is actually presented, in these older novels, is the struggle of Communism to build a new world, to destroy the bourgeois and the capitalist in the name of the new Communist master builders. And, no matter how bitter the struggle, it is always the Communist who finally triumphs.

In Dudintsev's novel there is no such conflict. The old world has long ago been obliterated by a succession of five-year plans. And yet there is a conflict *inside* the new world. It is actually a very old conflict—the struggle between spiritual and materialistic values. Instead of creation, there is, as Dudintsev demonstrates, only the struggle for life, the race for higher posts in the "new class" which Milovan Djilas described from his prison cell.

Dudintsev vividly depicts the climbers in the Moscow "executive suite": the powerful official, driving his new car, sparkling in his freshly pressed uniform; the aged "academician," a physicist of the old regime, still employed as adviser; the effeminate public relations man, smelling of perfume and vodka; and Lopatkin's unscrupulous boss, Drozdov, soon to become minister.

In his struggle Lopatkin has two faithful allies: his friend, old Busko, himself an inventor who has suffered as much as the young engineer; and Nadya, the woman who loves Lopatkin and sacrifices everything for him. How much Nadya reminds us of Turgenev's women! And Busko, playing Chopin and Rachmaninov on the old piano, is certainly closer to Chekhov than to any "new class." It is comforting to know that such people still exist in Russia, that they are neither dead nor obsolete.

Most comforting of all is the title of the book: *Not By Bread Alone.* These words, straight from the Gospels, cannot be shaken by the speeches hurled against them by Dudintsev's censors. These are words which cannot be "edited" or "revised," even by the men in the Kremlin.

BOOKS

Critics' Choices for Christmas

ANTHONY BAILEY

FOUR Worthies. By Wallace Notestein. Yale University Press. $4. There is nothing staid or prim about the four seventeenth century characters Professor Notestein so ably portrays in this book, although in fact, in their time, none of them was an important figure. Restoring them from their letters, journals, and contemporary documents, with verve and a graceful style, and yet leaving them exactly what they were in the period, Professor Notestein exacts from his figures information of great interest about the common background of their time. John Chamberlain, man-about-town and newsmonger; Lady Anne Clifford, wife, in turn, of two Earls; John Taylor, a ferryman and roving correspondent (his reports were in doggerel verse); and Oliver Heywood, a zealous Nonconformist missioner. Altogether a book which gives one an invigorating breath of seventeenth century England.

The Wapshot Chronicle. By John Cheever. Harper. $3.50. To imagine this novel's quality, one has to hold in one's head a hypothetical mixture: some Dickens, a lot of early Waugh, a pinch of Cotton Mather; all fired and tempered and transmuted by Mr. Cheever's ornate yet searching prose into a most original saga, both sad and tremendously comic. If there is another age of heroic kings, the bards will probably sing "The Wapshot Chronicle" into the late hours, and there will be great nostalgia for Mr. Cheever's New England. It is a triumph.

Craft and Character in Modern

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Fiction. By Morton Dauwen Zabel. Viking. $4.50. Dr. Zabel is one of the best American critics. He hasn't the wide and stubborn grasp of Edmund Wilson, nor the illuminating commitment of Lionel Trilling, but in these eighteen essays about English and American writers—Graham Greene, Hemingway, Ford Madox Ford, and Conrad, among others—he offers with considerable authority much precise and knowledgeable criticism. He is especially good on Conrad and Hardy; and to me, at any rate, (a long-time admirer of *The Good Soldier* and *Parade's End*), Dr. Zabel is particularly admirable for his inclusion of an essay on Ford Madox Ford, a novelist who perhaps brought on his own oblivion by writing so much that was worthless but who, on the strength of those two works alone, stands as one of the masters of this century. *The Good Soldier*, by the way, has been published this year as a paperback (Vintage. $1.25.). Unlike some "masterpieces," it can be read many times with profit.

Bernard Malamud's second novel *The Assistant. (Farrar, Straus. $3.50.)* and Angus Wilson's short stories *A Bit Off The Map. (Viking. $3.50.)* are two works of fiction which struck me as being somewhat more than "notable."

ELIZABETH BARTELME

IN A Great Tradition: Tribute to Dame Laurentia McLachlan, Abbess of Stanbrook. By the Benedictines of Stanbrook. Harper. $5. This affectionate portrayal of a versatile, spirited nun, pictured as a flower of Benedictine tradition, is a splendid recapitulation of a life glowing with happiness. Dame Laurentia devoted herself to three things: holiness, learning and friendship, at all of which she was eminently successful. Her long correspondence with Sir Sydney Cockerell and with G. B. Shaw, much of which is included, is an interesting sidelight on a most remarkable woman.

The Finest Stories of Sean O'Faolain. Little, Brown. $4.75. Stories masterly in form and in their exploration of textures of relationship and subtleties of motivation. Humorous, wise and sensitive, the collection as a whole reveals O'Faolain as a writer who has risen to the demands of his art and who has, through his years of writing, grown and developed in craftsmanship and understanding. These are not to be missed.

The Bridge. Vol. II. Edited by John M. Oesterreicher. Pantheon. $3.75. This second yearbook of Judaeo-Christian studies is an impressive symposium of intellectual breadth and originality designed to span the gap between Jewish and Christian thoughts and attitudes. Its intention is admirably realized in its preoccupation with a common heritage and of the harmonies that exist within it. Outstanding are the essays of Charles Journet, Quentin Lauer, S.J. and Alexander Jones.

The Town. By William Faulkner. Random House. $3.95. Now strongly entrenched in Jefferson, the inhuman Snopes clan, encountered in its initial rapacity in *The Hamlet*, pursues its policy of acquisition and

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destruction to a climax in which moral indignation replaces artistry and caricature blots out character. Though this is by no means his best book, Faulkner's old magic is still operative.

The Fall. By Albert Camus. Knopf. $3. A distinguished philosophical novel that examines man's despair and guilt and commits him to responsibility. This brief work is as admirable in its revelation of the development of Camus' thought as in its dedication to its thesis of struggle against the lovelessness of a world without hope.

Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Four Kings. By Amy Kelly. Vintage. $1.25. This is the chronicle of the stormy queen who married first the King of France, then Henry Plantagenet and became the mother of Richard the Lion-Hearted and John Lackland. Combining glittering style with scholarly attention to the period and personalities, it is without doubt a model for historical biography.

WILLIAM CLANCY

MUCH OF my reading this year has been an attempt to catch up with the paperbacks. This has meant a more than usual neglect of current titles. I am sure this neglect is reflected in the following list, but the five books here included (two old, three new) seem to me works of commanding distinction.

Dostoevsky. By Nicholas Berdyaev. Meridian. $1.25. Berdyaev's passionate probing of Dostoevsky's universe is an essay in the spiritual-intellectual shaking of the modern world. It is, really, an essay in eschatology, in the Christ and the Anti-Christ. And the whole book leads to Berdyaev's concluding affirmation: "So great is the worth of Dostoevsky that to have produced him is by itself sufficient justification for the existence of the Russian people in the world; and he will bear witness for his country at the last judgment of the nations."

Hilaire Belloc. By Robert Speaight. Farrar, Straus. $6.50. Mr. Speaight's life of Belloc is in a great tradition. It will take its place with such works as Ward's *Newman* in the library of English Catholic biography.

God the Unknown. By Victor White. Harper. $3.50. "Truly, Thou art a hidden God." One of the great mysteries of the Christian revelation is that we know God *as* unknown. Father White's book recalls us to this truth. And he relates it (along with other truths) to the work of some of the great contemporary Protestant theologians, especially Karl Barth.

Christianity and History. By Herbert Butterfield. Fontana. $.65. The God of the Old and New Testaments is the *Deus Absconditus,* as Father White reminds us, but He is also the God who has manifested Himself in time. Professor Butterfield's slim volume — remarkable both for its scholarship and its grace —is a classic statement of the continuing encounter between history and history's Lord. Its appearance in a sixty-five cent, paperback edition is one of the great prizes of the publishing year.

The Spirit and Forms of Protestantism. By Louis Bouyer. Newman. $3.75. The revival of Protestant theology is a major phenomenon of our century. Father Bouyer's book examines this revival in terms of Protestantism's original insights. In the process he contributes profoundly to the ecumenical dialogue now taking place throughout Christendom.

JAMES FINN

THE English Common Reader. By Richard D. Altick. University of Chicago. $6. Mr. Altick, whose book is subtitled "A Social History of the Mass Reading Public: 1800-1900," has written an informative, stimulating account of the growth of the reading public in nineteenth century England. While he wisely disclaims his study as a sure guide for the future, it is a significant contribution to an understanding of the relation between society and literature.

The Uses of Literacy. By Richard Hoggart. Essential. $5. A fascinating, highly readable account of the changes worked by mass publications on an urban, working-class culture during the last several decades. A personal, rather than a statistical or sociological, presentation of the background of the working classes gives depth and interest to this work.

Language: An Enquiry into its Meaning and Function. Edited by Ruth Nanda Anshen. Harper. $6. This volume, the eighth in the "Science of Culture" series, is sufficiently defined by its title. Among the eighteen contributors who examine language in its different aspects are Jacques Maritain, George Boas, Paul Tillich, R. P. Blackmur, Leo Spitzer, Francis Fergusson and Jean P. de Menasce.

God and the Ways of Knowing. By Jean Danielou, S.J. Meridian. $3.75. In this book, a section of which has previously appeared in The Commonweal, Father Danielou discusses the different ways in which God has spoken and speaks to man, the different ways in which He is known. "Amid all those ways of knowing," he writes "it is desirable to establish some kind of order." This book is the expression of that desire.

The Finest Stories of Sean O'Faolain. Little, Brown. $4.75. One of the few short story writers whose talent has steadily developed. Among the many fine stories here are the superb "The Man Who Invented Sin" and "Lovers of the Lake." And there are many others one can return to with undiminished pleasure.

ANNE FREMANTLE

THE Case of Cornelia Connelly. By Juliana Wadham. Pantheon. $3.75. The story of the young Philadelphian who, happily married to an equally young Episcopalian minister at the beginning of the nineteenth century, followed him into the Church, and regretfully agreed to go into a convent when he decided his vocation was to become a priest. How he reneged on God and Cornelia, and took their children from her, pursuing her in the Civil Courts, and how she turned this grotesque tragedy into sancity is soberly and credibly told.

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This is a book to make everyone's misfortunes, including one's own, seem picayune.

Memories of a Catholic Girlhood. By Mary McCarthy. Harcourt. $3.95. This is a tender, tragic and very funny story of another way of dealing with one's misfortunes. Mary McCarthy never apologizes, and never explains why she holds the Almighty responsible for the odious behavior of her relatives; and she complains a great deal. But she writes like a dream, and gives an astonishingly generous tribute to the Church as educatrix, and a nostalgic, warm account of convent life.

The Meeting of Love and Knowledge. By Martin D'Arcy, S.J. Harper. $3. A brief, brilliant discussion of some of the major problems before the Church today—its relation to pre-Christian and post-Christian mysticism and to the psychological discoveries of Freud and his successors. A seminal book that should be read slowly and often, and should set us all praying for the St. Thomas who will do for the Upanishads, the Buddhist scriptures and the Moslem philosophers what Aquinas did for Aristotle and Avicenna.

MICHAEL HARRINGTON

THIS year, the reprints have continued in a flood of paperbacks. There were several that I enjoyed very much, but I think I would put Kenneth Burke's *The Philosophy of Literary Form (Vintage. $1.25.)* on the top of the list. It is confusing, brilliant, erratic, provocative, and Burke, whose encyclopedic intelligence escapes any attempt to categorize him, is certainly one of our finest critics.

Among the novels which I read, the best is one soon to be published, *The Roots of Heaven (Simon and Schuster. $5.95.)*, a translation of Romain Gary's Prix Goncourt book. It is a combination of satire and serious writing about a man who defends the rights of elephants in Africa. The French Foreign Office, at the novel's end, still doesn't believe that's what he's doing.

J. F. C. Fuller is, of course, an outstanding military historian. His *Grant and Lee (Indiana University Press. $5.)* is a stimulating study which appreciates both the unique personalities of the protagonists and the social conditions which stamped their tactics. I'm not a Civil War buff but I enjoyed this book.

Irving Howe's *Politics and the Novel (Meridian. $1.35.)* has many a judgment which I would qualify one way or the other. Yet it is a provocative, sensitive analysis in an area in which our many-sided contemporary criticism has defaulted.

And finally, the reappearance of Trotsky's monumental *The History of the Russian Revolution (University of Michigan. $12.50.)* is a cause for rejoicing. Even for those who passionately disagree with Trotsky's politics, this is a book which should not be missed. It is huge, brilliant, insightful — and magnificently written. Indeed, I cannot think of a history by a participant in our time that even comes close to it.

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RICHARD HAYES

A *Guide to Contemporary French Literature. By Wallace Fowlie. Meridian. $1.45.* Mr. Fowlie marks, with poise and grace of sensibility as well as fact, the seminal lines in a literary situation of upheaval and audacity. Everywhere he makes diverse commitments of spirit tactile and concrete, and succeeds in that most delicate task of conveying a sense of individual personality. Its aphoristic elegance is one of the pleasures of Mr. Fowlie's *Guide;* its distinction lies in the authority with which it records the opposing voices, the dialogues and antinomies—of pessimism and pride, of tradition and inquiry, of desire and capacity and logic and the abyss—which breed the solitude, the eloquence and spirituality of the French literary mind.

Angel. By Elizabeth Taylor. Viking. $3.50. Mrs. Taylor's dramatization of images of egotism and monstrous self-illusion is troubling, exotic and mad. It is also witty in a total, searching manner which is never trivial and always alive to human pain. I take *Angel* to be but an artful postponement of the major work which lies still before Mrs. Taylor—a full-scale grappling with the diffusion of British society—but as an essay, classical yet compassionate, on the grotesque lineaments of personality, it could not be better. No one, incidentally, has remarked the close and fantastic affinities which exist between Mrs. Taylor's Angelica and the Edwardian novelist Ouida.

By Grace of Love. By Anne Fremantle. Macmillan. $3.50. The uncommon interest and hazard of Mrs. Fremantle's novel is to refract, through a subtle and highly developed feminine sensibility, a theme of religious catastrophe and cost which has been pre-empted by writers (usually male) of a sulphurous mood and *parti pris.* Mrs. Fremantle does not enjoy their authority of obsession, but the religious feeling of *By Grace of Love* gains, obliquely, in affecting conviction, in deep composure and quality of mind. On another, less intense level, this novel registers ceremonial aspects of society, and the nature of English romanticism and loyalty, with animation and zest.

Portraits of Places. By Henry James. Lear Publishers. James well at ease is James, happily, still, and these occasional pieces—on Venice, on Paris, on Warwickshire and abbeys and a London summer—have value beyond that of a testing ground for the later massive fictions. They excel in energy of discrimination, in a delighted sense of spectacle, in organized refinement of cosmopolitan perception, and best of all, in a lovely, continuous suggestion of the available spirit.

I should wish to remind readers of The Commonweal of Mrs. Sybille Bedford's novel *A Legacy,* a book which I reviewed in these pages, and one which masks with a baroque surface an achieved beauty of conception and moral consciousness rare at any moment.

JEAN HOLZHAUER

A *LEGACY. By Sybille Bedford. Simon & Schuster. $3.50.* The complex, refracted story of two families, one Jewish, in Germany between the great wars. It rewards concentrated reading with a frequent permanence of beauty in the mind.

The Towers of Trebizond. By Rose Macaulay. Farrar, Straus. $3.75. Not a Catholic novel in the sense meant by Catholic-novel hunters, this book takes a long look at the weight of religion in some specific and familiar human affairs.

The Called and the Chosen. By Monica Baldwin. Farrar, Straus. $3.95. A new version of the escaped nun theme, currently so popular. Miss Baldwin knows whereof she speaks, being an ex-nun. Despite the backing and filling of much of her Catholic audience, she offers them a book worth reading.

The Sound of a Distant Horn. By Sven Stolpe. Sheed & Ward. $3.95. Successful combinations of religious and psychological values come, thus far, only from European novelists. Mr. Stolpe has the advantage over American writers in being able, nearly without self-consciousness, to investigate souls from both angles.

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The Feast of Lupercal. By Brian Moore. Atlantic-Little, Brown. $3.75. A second fictional exploration of the constrictions of Irish temperament, culture and religion, by the author of the earlier and equally effective *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne.*

J. N. MOODY

CHRISTIAN Democracy in Western Europe, 1820-1953. By Michael P. Fogarty. Univ. of Notre Dame Press. $6.75. A much needed survey of a series of movements which came to maturity in key European countries since World War II. This volume sketches their history, ideas, and programs, and concludes with a prognosis of their future and an attempt to set them in the perspective of church history.

Adenauer and the New Germany. By Edgar Alexander. Farrar, Straus. $5.25. A compressed version of a longer German edition, it aims to place the contemporary German statesman in the historical setting of West German Catholicism. A study, rather than a biography, it recognizes Adenauer's paternalism as a transitional stage in the development of a German democracy based on natural law principles.

The Modern Apostle. By Louis J. Putz, C.S.C. Fides. $2.95. At a time when interest in the lay apostolate is expanding, a priest who has been in the vanguard of the movement for fifteen years has produced a book which outlines its need, its opportunities, and its problems. Less profound than Father Congar's *Lay People in the Church,* which has been recently translated and published in this country, it is probably more suited to our present development.

Marriage is Holy. Edited by H. Caffarel. Fides. $3.75. A useful book for our burgeoning Christian Family Movement, and for married couples generally. A collection of essays which emphasize the spiritual aspect of marriage, it is theologically sound, inspiring, and concrete enough to meet the actual problems of living together in Christ.

The French Nation from Napoleon to Pétain, 1814-1940. By D. W. Brogan. Hamish Hamilton. $5.50. Britain's leading expert on French history—and curiously on American government—sets out to explore the modern world's most interesting dilemma: why a people who in the past one hundred and fifty years have excelled in nearly every field of achievement, have failed to find institutions that united them and gave them a political life worthy of their genius and their legitimate hopes.

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The Hidden Persuaders. By Vance Packard. McKay. $4. People should be angry at the advertisers with their effrontery and their techniques for invading kitchens and living rooms and every cranny of American life, for making friends and "selling people." Vance Packard is furious at them and at their steamed-up methods and is sure to make a lot of us furious at these pervasive and perennial confidence men.

The Christian Idea of Education. Edited by Edmund Fuller. Yale. $4. The men giving these talks and discussions at Kent School were raising the question of a possible Christian learning, though perhaps only Jacques Maritain was fully aware of the question. Even Reverend W. G. Pollard, executive director of the Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies, in his wonderful chapter on a renaissance of Christian culture, remained unaware of it, and though E. H. Harbison of Princeton University encountered the question in his use of St. Augustine he remained unaware of the question. But to brush the question at all makes the book an event.

On the Philosophy of History. Jacques Maritain. Edited by Joseph W. Evans. Scribners. $3.50. A few years ago Charles Journet, author of a great book on the Church, wrote an article on M. Maritain's Christian philosophy of history and culture. Thus encouraged, and also invited by the University of Notre Dame, Maritain gave lectures on philosophy of history which he says falls within Christian ethical philosophy. He says that though this part of philosophy uses the factual data of history, it seeks an "intelligible necessity founded in the nature of things and providing us with a *raison d'être*." The whole is carefully edited by a friend and disciple of Maritain's.

Dynamics of World History. By Christopher Dawson. Edited by John J. Mulloy. Sheed and Ward. $6. John J. Mulloy has done an exceedingly good work in bringing together Dawson's essays looking toward a sociology of history and toward a philosophy of history. It is remarkable and inspiring to have both Dawson and Maritain appearing at once with high-ranking works, as are all their works on these mighty subjects and taking account of major thinkers on human destiny such as Augustine, Hegel, Marx, Spengler and Toynbee.

CRITICS

Anthony Bailey, a frequent contributor, is on the staff of the *New Yorker*.

Elizabeth Bartelme is on the staff of a well-known New York publishing house.

***William Clancy* is the editor of *Worldview*.**

James Finn is an associate editor of The Commonweal.

Anne Fremantle, whose novel *By Grace of Love* was just published, is a contributing editor of The Commonweal.

Michael Harrington writes on literary and cultural matters for a number of American journals.

Richard Hayes is drama critic for The Commonweal.

Jean Holzhauer writes for *Today*, *The Critic* and other journals.

Father J. N. Moody, a regular contributor, is on the faculty of Ladycliff College, New York.

Father Leo R. Ward of Notre Dame is the author of *Christian Ethics*.

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New Light on a Troubling Author

THE FRENCH FACE OF EDGAR POE. By Patrick F. Quinn. Southern Illinois University Press. $5.

By THOMAS F. CURLEY

THE AUTHOR, professor of Comparative Literature at Wellesley College, has written an excellent book. Thanks to Professor Quinn's study, those who read Poe in English may now be able to speak intelligibly to those who read him in French.

It has been more than a century since the French discovered Poe, who is now held in such high esteem that most Americans can only shake their heads, unable to understand, much less to agree. Professor Quinn writes that he felt like most Americans when he began his study: "I thought that my inquiry would take me back to the origins and up through the history of a great misunderstanding, or even a great hoax. Frankly, I had it in mind to write a kind of exposé, and I suspected that the villain of the piece would be Baudelaire, the man who, on the subject of Poe, had led France and most of Europe up the garden." He now believes that the French reading of Poe makes it possible for us ". . . to bring a new and enlarged understanding to one of our own writers."

Three great French poets have devoted their attention to Poe: Baudelaire, Mallarmé and Valéry. It is with the Poe of Baudelaire, the Poe of the tales, that Professor Quinn is particularly concerned. It is the Poe of the stories, the psychologist, rather than the poet of Mallarmé or the critic and aesthetician of Valéry, that has elicited popular response in France.

Baudelaire is the central figure in this study and the author gives three central chapters to an account of Baudelaire's relationship to Poe. Among many other things, he contradicts a widely held notion of what Baudelaire did. Many readers of Poe in English have assumed that Baudelaire's translations constitute a radical improvement. That is not Professor Quinn's conclusion. "This or that detail may have been overlooked, or improved, or weakened in translation. But there is no full-scale transmutation."

In the first two chapters, the author gives in some detail the studies of Poe by a number of French critics who followed Baudelaire's lead. In doing so he notices, and praises with reservations, the two-volume, psychoanalytic study of Poe by Marie Bonaparte. He remarks: "It is one of the many ironies in the history of Poe's

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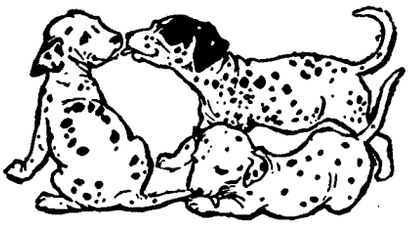

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reputation that this, the most exhaustive scrutiny of his work, should have been written in French; that it should remain at this date so little known in his country (unmentioned, for example, in the bibliographical volume of *Literary History of the United States*); and that the recent (1949) translation should have been published in England, but not here until 1954." Those of us (and I am one of the "us") who have seen only one chapter of her work ("The Black Cat" in the *Partisan Review*) ought to take note of Professor Quinn's remark that it is easier to quarrel with the individual details of Mme. Bonaparte's work than with the whole.

But it is the last part of the author's study that is most valuable to Americans. It is here that he uses the information and insights of the French to better our understanding of Poe. The key work is *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*. "Thus of all the work of Poe, *Arthur Gordon Pym* is the crucial text because it provides on a large scale an exercise in understanding Poe's characteristic methods. Through a study of this book one learns how Poe should be read. We have seen how many of his recurrent themes are given actual or latent expression in this one long story; and here also we find reflected the two major aspects of Poe's mind, the one obscure in the dark torment of nightmare, the other lucid and enquiring, and eager to explain. . . ."

It is this radical division in Poe's personality that helps explain his recurrent use of the theme of the Double (so obvious in "William Wilson") and also of his narrative method in the detective stories. Professor Quinn is a good reader, alert to suggestion and not ashamed to make such suggestions explicit. He shows, for example, how *The Fall of the House of Usher* is also based on the Doppelganger theme. Madeleine Usher, the twin sister, and the house reflected in the water ". . . . represent the dark, under side of (Roderick) Usher's mind, the depths which cannot plainly be 'read,' and which are nonetheless forcibly felt to exist. And therein also is the source of man's fatal malady."

Thanks to Professor Quinn's explicitness I see far more clearly now than I did before the justice of Allen Tate's remark: "Poe is the transitional figure in modern literature because he discovered our great subject, the disintegration of personality, but kept it in a language that had developed in a tradition of unity and order."

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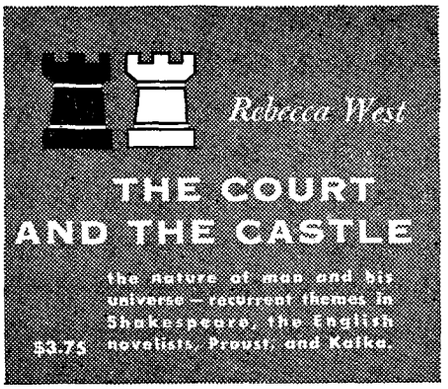
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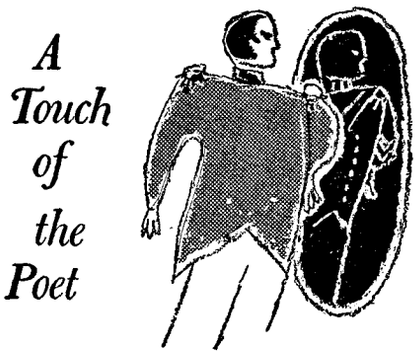

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ideal, a life of solitude. His many talents, inevitably, interfered; how could such a man—one wonders while reading this first, a fine, biography—escape notice?

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Consider, for a moment, a few of his statements, generously quoted in this life: "I think the relation of our petty annoyance and inconveniences is a source of *amusement,* and the very relation of them makes one see how trivial they really are, and how absurd one is to fume and fret all the time over such trifles. Laugh at them and they are nothing." *"When God calls us* (speaking by His Holy Spirit in our conscience) *to do certain things,* we *must* do them or deteriorate in our spiritual life." "Love is not a perishable thing . . . love *per se,* is a gift for eternity." "The fruit of the apostolate springs not from any action, not from any work, not from preaching, but wholly from union with Christ Jesus, Who says 'With-

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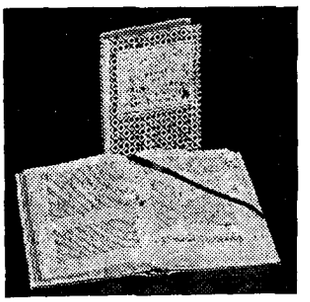

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out Me you can do nothing.'" "All heaven is one great marriage: that of all the redeemed—the mystical body, the spouse of the Lamb. In the Beatific Vision we shall gaze on God. God *is* Beauty—the All Beautiful. Art is Beauty, and Beauty is God."

These few sentences make a spiritual catena. Other statements of his define the man of art defending art; the architect explaining architecture; the lover of creatures; the lover of humor; the lover of life; the man of sensibilities. "I get more and more mixed up as to what mysticism and contemplation really are, the more I read about them. It's all very 'high flown!' The only sort for me that I can understand is that of the holy Curé d'Ars farm laborer sitting in the church before the tabernacle, *'I look at Him, and He looks at me,'* or St. Francis praying all night, *'My God and my All.'* The present status of Adam's earthly Paradise, the Third Heaven, and the Seven Rungs of the Ladder of Perfection are quite beyond me!" "We never realize the full extent of our happiness in some particular place until after we have left it." Such statements are developed throughout the book.

Fra Jerome was, Bishop O'Collins remarked, "an architect, painter, sculptor, stonemason, decorator, poet, horseman and horse breeder." All that, and more, a commentator. On some modern art: "Tripe and onions!" On some modern architecture: "concrete match-box churches." On some chant: "More *acrobatices* than in a soprano's warbling of any of the florid operatic Masses!" The man had wit, and charm.

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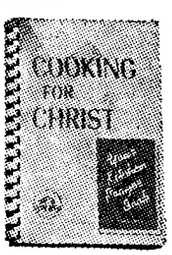

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By THOMAS MOLNAR

IN AN EDITORIAL, some time ago, The Commonweal referred to Mr. Russell Kirk and myself as "men counted among conservatives." But there are, I submit, varieties of conservatism and dissonances among the men who accept the label. Mr. Kirk, for example, defines his own brand of conservative as "a person who endeavors to conserve the best in our traditions and our institutions, reconciling that best with necessary reform from time to time." The key words in this formula are "best in our traditions and institutions." For the non-conservative members of society this is a value-judgment, not

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necessarily shared. If the best in our traditions were an undisputable block which we preserve or discard but define similarly on either side of the fence, the public debate would be conducted about clear issues. It may, however, be taken as a mode of interpretation according to a given frame of reference. Mr. Kirk would probably reply now that if this is so, then one of these frames of reference is the best in our tradition. He will have convinced me and, let us hope, the intelligent woman whom he intends to guide to conservatism; but the liberals would oppose him a *non possumus:* They would say that they too want to preserve the best, the best being not this or that institution or tradition, but the *spirit* of invention, evolution, change which had engendered them and will engender others. Do we not hear it often said that the American tradition is one of progress and change, therefore, to be true to ourselves, let us never stop? In a New York *Times* article a few weeks ago, Professor Lipset put the following caption under the figure of the Conservative (a rather ridiculous medieval knight): "Conservatives have not had an ideology, they simply have tried to stop change."

The dialogue between Mr. Kirk and his liberal opponents is thus beset with misunderstandings. This is true of his latest book, *The American Cause.* No meaningful debate would be possible between the author and someone not in or close to his own camp. He outlines the American cause by defining the principles which have made this country "orderly, free, just and wealthy"—"a very good proof," he adds, "that its ideas have been sound and true." But, one could answer Mr. Kirk, the state of a society or a nation is not the product of its *ideas* alone; it also depends on external circumstances, some within, others without its control. At any rate, a society does not exist in a vacuum, its position —and ideas—undergo modifications as its relationship to other societies and nations changes. This is particularly true about the United States which, only fifty years ago,

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was safely cushioned between two oceans, and is today more vulnerable—because more powerful and important—than, say, France or Italy.

The same gulf may be said to exist between principle and reality in another significant chapter of the "American cause": free economy. "The conviction," Mr. Kirk writes, "that a free economy is a support of all freedom is one strong motive behind the American championship of capitalism or free economic enterprise." Let us hope that freedom has other supports as well. Because as another, though not self-avowed, conservative, Professor Hayek, points out, "the policies of . . . organized capital and organized labor work in the same direction, that is a monopolistic organization of industry; the private entrepreneurs seek government protection" and become, in fact if not in name, civil servants. (*The Road to Serfdom*, p. 194.) And a non-conservative economist, Professor C. Wright Mills, seems to agree: "Government officials and top business leaders and managers not only work together, but actually take over each other's jobs; government experts accept jobs in firms they are supposed to regulate in their agency's name, and business leaders become government officials." (*White Collar*, p. 83).

Thus the American cause is changing under what the liberals would call "the pressure of circumstances." While it is essential to call attention, unceasingly, to *principles*, it is also important to point out why *practice* is often unable to be in harmony with them. But, of

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course, Mr. Kirk's great merit is —and has been since the publication of *The Conservative Mind*— to remind us that under the quicksand of great transformations the principles remain fixed. What he quotes from a confidential Red Chinese report about the ease with which American prisoners of war —ignorant of their country's past history, present problems and future aspirations—could be brainwashed, is truly frightening, and calls for a vast improvement of education in the principles Mr. Kirk so eloquently calls to the rescue of our times.

This is why I refer, in the title of this review, to his *Guide to Conservatism* and *The American Cause* as "catechisms." In fact, Mr. Kirk's shorter works usually present an intriguing combination, quite rare today, of a doctrinal exposé and a pamphlet. The philosopher's grasp of ideas and the pamphleteer's singleness of purpose are the great qualities to be found in his two latest books also.

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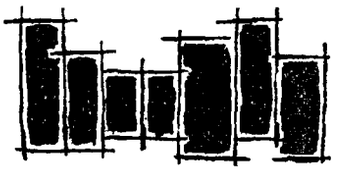

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